

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested. Claims 1-19, 21-41 and 43-103 are pending, Claims 20 and 42 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, Claims 8-15, 30-37, 52-59, 79-91 withdrawn from consideration, and Claims 97 and 101 having been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action Claims 20, 42, 97 and 101 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claims 1, 16, 17, 21, 38, 39, 45, 60, 61, 67, 92, 93 were indicated as being anticipated by Nagashima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,994,790, herein "Nagashima"); and Claims 2-7, 18-22, 24-29, 40-44, 46-51, 62-66, 68-78, 94-97, 100-103 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the identification of allowable subject matter.

In reply, Claim 20 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 42 has been canceled without prejudice as containing a specific structural feature that was unnecessary, as it depended from a claim having means-plus-function claim elements.

Claims 97 and 101 have been amended to address the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. It is believed that Claims 97 and 101, as amended, comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. However, if the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned so that mutually agreeable claim language may be identified.

Applicants traverse all the rejections based on Nagashima. The outstanding Office Action asserts that Nagashima discloses all the elements of each of these rejected claims. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Each of the claims is directed to a method, or apparatus, having step start features. As explained in the present specification, step start devices are used in power supply systems so

that full power is not immediately applied. (Specification, page 1, paragraph [0002]).

Current limiting devices such as “step start” resistors or other devices are inserted in-line with the load to limit the current delivered to the load for a predetermined time interval. After the interval of time has expired, these resistors are removed from the circuit, so the circuit may begin normal operation. (Specification, paragraph [0002]).

In a non-limiting example, and referring to Figure 1A of the present patent application, examples of step start devices are resistors 114, 116 and 118, that limit the current from 480 volt AC input to the high voltage power supply 124.

Nagashima does not teach or suggest a device that uses step start monitoring or step start devices. The outstanding Office Action refers to elements 58 in Figures 3 and 9. However, these are shunt resistors (in parallel with the load). Accordingly, in a power on event, the shunt resistors would not limit the current to the loads and therefore are not step start devices. This is more easily seen in Figure 1, where the power supply portion 52 is connected directly to a load 53, and the current detecting means 58 (shunt resistor), is in parallel with the load 53. Accordingly, the current detecting means 58 are not step start devices.

As each of the claims include step start devices and/or process steps it is respectfully submitted that Nagashima does not disclose all the elements of the rejected claims. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that each of the rejected claims patentably defines over Nagashima.


Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments it is respectfully submitted that each of the rejected Claims 1, 16, 17, 38, 39, 45, 60, 61, 67, 92, 93, 97 and 101 patentably define over the asserted art. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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